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ABSTRACT

This document presents the most recently revised guide to the protocol and review process for external review of universities in the Netherlands. Part 1 consists of a description of the review process, an explanation of the protocol, and the roles of the parties involved, with further discussion of the actions of the visiting committee, the faculty, and the Association of Universities in the Netherlands. This part contains seven chapters. In Chapter 1 the external program review is placed in the broader context of integrated quality control. Chapter 2 presents the characteristics of the review system. Chapter 3 discusses the self-study, and Chapter 4 contains a checklist for self-study implementation. Chapter 5 explains the protocol with reference to what the visiting committee is required to do. Chapter 6 discusses the activities of the faculty in the program review. Chapter 7 discusses the role of the Association of Universities in the Netherlands. Part II presents the protocol in four chapters discussing respectively: the aim and progress of the external quality control; the visiting committee; the faculty; and the role and responsibilities of the Association of Universities in the Netherlands ("VSNU"). Five appendixes contain an overview of the reviews from 1988 to 1990, tables of quantitative data, appointment decisions, timetable of reviews 1991-1996, and a list of 18 publications in the context of quality control. (JB)

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Guide for external program review

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PREFACE

The Guide for External Program Review ("Gids voor de onderwijsvisitatie") presented here replaces the Guide to External Quality Assessment ("Gids voor Externe Kvaliteitszorg") published in November 1988. The Guide has been rewritten following experience with the visiting committees between 1988 and 1990. The amendments have been made as a result of the proposals put forward in the memorandum Quality Control within the Universities ("Kwaliteitszorg binnen de universiteiten") which was accepted by the General Board (Algemeen Bestuur) of the VSNU (Association of Universities in the Netherlands) and the Governing Board (Bestuurlijk Overleg) on 27 April 1990.

The protocol remains as it was set down in the Governing Board on 4 November 1988. An endeavour has been made to make the description of the review process and the explanation of the protocol as clear as possible and, where necessary, to make it more precise.

Part 1 consists of a description of the review process and an explanation of the protocol. The activities of the various parties concerned are further discussed: the visiting committee, the faculty and the VSNU.

In Chapter 1 the external program review is placed in the broader context of integrated quality control. In Chapter 2 the characteristics of the review system are presented. The hinge linking external and internal quality control is the self study. This plays a vital role in the review process. In Chapter 3 the self study is discussed and directions are given as to how it should be set up. In Chapter 4 a checklist is presented for the implementation of the self study.

Chapter 5 consists of an explanation of the protocol with reference to what the visiting committee is required to do. Chapter 6 discusses further the activities expected of the faculty in the context of the program review. Chapter 7 discusses the role of the VSNU, and the bureau of the VSNU, with respect to the program reviews.

In Part II the protocol is presented as it was laid down by the Governing Board (Bestuurlijk Overleg) on 4 November 1988, and which serves as the basis for the review system.

The "Guide for External Program Review" and the protocol which it subsumes are not intended to be a straitjacket into which every review has to be forced. They are intended rather as a manual for the parties concerned in order to facilitate the smooth running of the review process. Should it be necessary, a differentiated approach is possible. Should the use of the Guide lead to any comment or critical remarks, it would be appreciated if these could be conveyed to the bureau of the VSNU.

Should there be any questions concerning the review process, contact can always be made with drs. A. I. Vroeijenstijn, who operates from the bureau of the VSNU as the process coordinator of the external quality control.

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DESCRIPTION

OF

THE REVIEW PROCESS

AND

EXPLANATION OF THE PROTOCOL

1. INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL QUALITY CONTROL

Since the appearance in 1985 of the policy document "Higher Education: Autonomy and Quality" ("HOAK-nota"), the concept of "quality" has been the focus of attention. As a result the impression could be obtained that "quality control" is a separate activity within the universities. In fact continuous and structural attention to quality forms a part of general management. As such it can be distinguished, but it should not be separated, from general management. What is meant by "quality control" is systematic, structured attention to quality, directed to the maintenance and improvement of quality. Quality control is the necessary condition for the guarantee of quality (Vroeijenstijn, 1990).

A number of steps can be distinguished within quality control:

a) quality monitoring: measurement of quality.

The progress of the input, the process, and the resulting output can be followed by means of a number of standard instruments. It is possible to ascertain at any moment what the situation is with respect to quality (= the achievement of preformulated objectives and requirements). A continuous system of observation and measurement (registration of student progress; pass /fail ratios; graduate unemployment data etc) allows a finger to be held on the pulse at all times, and further action to be undertaken should the necessity be indicated.

b) evaluation: self study; strengths / weaknesses analysis.

The information systematically collected concerning the realization of preformulated goals can sometimes lead to a deeper evaluation. Further to that, periodic self evaluation should be undertaken in order to arrive at a strengths / weaknesses analysis.

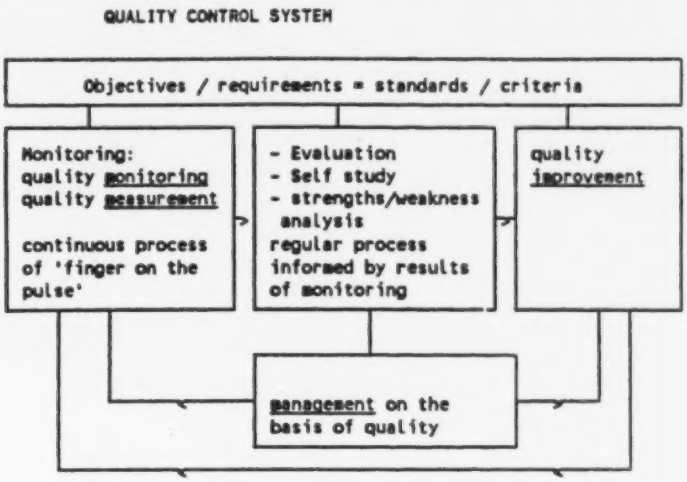
c) quality improvement

The results of the evaluations and strengths / weaknesses analyses should lead to measures which can be taken in order to improve quality. The bottlenecks and weak points which are identified have to be eliminated.

d) management on the basis of quality

Although quality control is no end in itself, but should be integrated into general management policy, management on the basis of quality can be distinguished within the overall process of quality control. The term "quality management" is used by some people here. The results of the activities above can sometimes lead to management on the basis of quality; whether that is a question of the maintenance of the qualitatively good, or the strengthening of the qualitatively weak, measures have to be taken.

The system of quality control can be represented by the following diagram:



Within the system of quality control a distinction can be drawn between internal and external quality control.

What is understood by internal quality control is the systematic, structured attention which is applied within an institution in order to maintain or improve quality (signalling, evaluation, quality management).

While it is in general clear what is meant by internal quality control, that is not always the case for external quality control. In the literature we often find that external quality control is linked with activities undertaken by the government, the inspectorate, or some other independent body. In that event the term 'external' is related to the nature of the initiator. In that sense the ministerial exploration committees are considered to be external, as would be the visiting committees set up by the Minister in 1986 for the purposes of the SKG ("Selectieve Krimp en Groei": Selective Cutback and Expansion) operation. This conception of external quality control is more appropriate for the time preceding the HOAK phase, before there was any talk of a link between autonomy and the guarantee of quality.

The universities have given another connotation to the concept of external quality control. Here what is understood is the systematic and structural attention to educational quality for which external experts, the visiting committees, are recruited. The term "external" is not related here to the nature of the initiator, but rather to the fact that experts from outside the institution are involved in the quality control. The recruitment of external experts is not however a control from outside; it is rather an extension of the internal quality control. The visiting committee is an extra instrument in the hands of a university or faculty, on the one hand for the analysis of, or reflection upon, their own functioning; and on the other hand for external accountability.

To date, quality control at national level has been concentrated on research within the system of "Voorwaardelijke Financiering" (Conditional Financing System), and on the first phase of the educational program within the framework of the external review system. There has been a further approach made with respect to the guarantee of educational quality through the establishment of a Program Recognition Committee.

Quality control is set up so that the processes within an organization which influence quality can be managed in such a way that the quality sought can be achieved. This is expressed in the quality of education policy which forms part of general management. A coherent system of quality control, of which external control with the recruitment of external experts forms a part, is related to both the primary and the secondary processes of universities: education, research, social service, and management.

To date the systems concerning the quality control of education and of research have operated separately, while within these not all aspects are taken into account. The Conditional Financing System, for example, is concerned with a part of the research programs, and research management is not attended to. With education, attention is concentrated on the first phase. Only incidental attention has been paid by visiting committees to the second phase.

In order to arrive at a coherent system of educational quality control (whether integrated or not), the following points need to be addressed in the very near future:

- <u>The approach to the quality control of research</u>

  Within the VSNU context the universities are at present considering the way in which the Conditional Financing System and the assessment of research shall proceed. Subjects of discussion are the scope and depth of evaluation, the distribution of the disciplines, the desirability of a more differentiated evaluation and the question as to whether all research ought to be evaluated.

- <u>The approach to the quality control of education</u>

  To date the visiting committees have confined themselves to the first phase. In just one case it has been arranged for a visiting committee to attend to an element of second phase education, namely the review for university teacher training in 1992. Within the framework of a coherent system it must be considered whether educational provision as a whole can or ought to be involved: the second phase programs, the training of Ph.D. students (the AIO programs), post initial educational provision, education of researchers.

- <u>The coherence of the quality control of research and education</u>

  Signals come regularly from the separate systems of quality control that in the assessment of education, research should also be involved, and vice versa. It has been suggested to have a self evaluation precede external assessment also where research has been concerned. Careful coordination if not integration will be necessary, even though extensive problems can be anticipated in the actual implementation.

- Program recognition and diploma recognition in international context

  It is of the greatest importance that, with the disappearance of national borders in 1992, the universities in the Netherlands will be able to compete with those abroad. This means that it is necessary for Dutch educational programs and the associated diplomas to be recognized internationally. Three steps are necessary in order to proceed from the recognition of a program to the recognition of a diploma:

  - Evaluation of the program prior to its implementation: Program Recognition Committee;

  - Evaluation of the program following its implementation. A recognized program does not necessarily result in a diploma of high quality. An unsatisfactory realization of the program can frustrate this. It is therefore necessary to assess quality retrospectively: visiting committee.

  - The combination of the results of the Program Recognition Commitee and the evaluation of the visiting committee can eventually lead to diploma recognition.

- Coordination of activities related to quality control

  An endeavour is being made to build quality control in education into a more coordinated system of general retrospective periodic control, possibly preceded in some cases by program recognition, and sometimes followed up by an exploration committee.

  For this it is necessary to avoid an overlap of quality control with the activities of the Minister (the inspectorate) and of other bodies (RAWB). Within the context of the HOOP dialogue, agreement with the Minister must be made with this in mind concerning the timetable of activities for a certain period of time.

While discussions concerning the form of integrated quality control are taking place the program reviews will proceed as normal. The first cycle of these will be completed according to agreements already made.

2. THE PROGRAM REVIEWS 1988 - 1990

In April 1986 it was agreed with the minister of Education & Science that the institutions for higher education should take upon themselves a flexible, comprehensive and unambiguous system of external quality control. In 1987, in order to put that agreement into effect, within the context of the VSNU the universities took the initiative of establishing a system of external quality assessment. This system is characterized by the following features:

* it is complementary to the internal quality control: the self study is the cornerstone of the system;

* the most important instrument is the committee of external experts; the visiting committee;

* a discipline oriented approach has been chosen. It is not the institute which forms the focus of attention, but the discipline, and, within the discipline, the degree program;

* it is to date directed to the educational provision, with the intention that at some time in the future the quality control of research and social service will either be incorporated, or will run parallel to the system;

* it is a national system; that is to say, all the institutions having a certain degree program are involved;

* it is periodic; all disciplines / degree programs will be examined every six years;

* it is comprehensive: within six years all degree programs will have been examined; there are some 150 degree programs involved, brought into 26 review clusters.

* it is public; that is to say, on conclusion of the evaluation, the visiting committee will bring out a report that will be published by those who commissioned it - the VSNU.

The remit and the manner of working of the visiting committee, together with the requirements made of the faculties with respect to the self evaluation and the self study report, were laid down in the protocol established by the Governing Board on 4 November 1988. The protocol and an explanation of it were included in the Guide To External Quality Assessment ("Gids voor Externe Kwaliteitszorg") (VSNU, July 1988). The timetable and the distribution of the degree programs among the visiting committees was laid down in the Timetable for Program Reviews and the Distribution of the degree programs among the Visiting committees ("Rooster voor onderwijsvisitaties en indeling der studierichtingen naar visitatiecomissie"), VSNU, July 1989.

In 1988 the protocol and the manner of working were tested in the trial reviews which took place in:

* history;
* physics and astronomy;
* psychology;
* mechanical engineering (including maritime technology).

Since it was a trial that was involved, and the faculties could not be expected to suffer any disadvantage resulting from any untoward mishaps, it was agreed that the reporting of the evaluations to the faculties would remain confidential. In the event each committee has in fact brought out a report concerning each discipline as a whole. The VSNU has published these in a report, Concerning the Quality of Dutch University Education ("Over de kvaliteit van het Nederlandse universitair ondervijs"), VSNU, 1988. The course of the trial round of review was reported in: The Evaluation of the Project 'Trial Reviews' ("De evaluatie van het project proefvisitaties"), VSNU, 1988b. After some limited adaptation of the protocol and the Guide it was decided to proceed with the system of external quality control supported by committees of external experts. It was further decided to include the trial round directly in the first cycle of program evaluation.

In 1989 four committees were at work in the second round:

* geography (social and physical geography, urban and rural planning, demography and pre- and protohistory);
* mathematics and computer science;
* non-western languages and cultures, Slavonic languages and cultures, Finno-Ugrian language and culture;
* industrial design and aeronautics and space technology.

The reports were published in April 1990.

For the third round (program reviews in 1990) visiting committees have been appointed for:

* biology;
* law;
* philosophy;
* economics;
* electrical engineering.

From the table in appendix 1 it can be seen that, in the first three rounds (1988 - 1990), 50 different degree programs in 87 different faculties have been involved with an program review.

3. THE SELF STUDY

The external quality assessment is no end in itself, but rather an extension of the internal quality control. The hinge linking the external and the internal quality control is the self study which the faculty is required to present to the visiting committee in accordance with article 3.3 of the protocol. This self study is the record of an internal evaluation which takes place within the degree program in the period preceding the visit of the visiting committee.

In this chapter the importance of the self study is considered further. Suggestions are put forward concerning the implementation of the evaluation and the draving up of the self study. The manner in which the evaluation is carried out is determined by the faculty itself. There are however some rules which need to be adhered to with respect to the form and content of the self study.

3.1 Aim of the self study

The aim of the self study is threefold:

a) stimulation of the internal quality control through analysis of strengths and veaknesses;

b) internal preparation for the visit of the visiting committee;

c) the provision of basic information for the visit of the visiting committee.

The self study which the faculty presents to the visiting committee determines to a very large extent the course and the effectiveness of the visit. The better the self study, the better will the committee be able to carry out its work. Some of the 50 self studies which have been presented to date indicate that some faculties concerned have had the unfortunate tendency to perceive the self study as a 'public relations' document. An attempt is made to portray the situation in as flattering a light as possible. The committee has then to commence its activities by breaking through the façade in order to arrive at the actual state of affairs. Another problem that has been encountered with some of the self studies is that they remain at the level of description and are insufficiently analytical. An evaluation of one's own situation is missing.

A good self evaluation describes and analyses the degree program concerned as accurately as possible, and includes a self evaluation. The work of the committee members is then a matter of the discussion of the self evaluation, setting it against their own impressions concerning the quality of education rather than having to embark on a "fact finding" mission of their own.

3.2 The approach to the internal evaluation

It is the faculty which determines how the internal evaluation is carried out. On the basis of experience with the reviews that have taken place so far however a number of suggestions can be made which can facilitate the process:

- the Faculty Board should take responsibility for the presentation of the self study;
- the self evaluation and the setting up of the self study should not be the work of one single person;
- the evaluation committee should consist of some three to five people, under the chair of the coordinator appointed by the faculty;
- a clear timetable should be set up, assuming a total amount of time available of some five or six months between the moment of the formal announcement and the actual visit. An early start can often be made since the timetable of the reviews is made known beforehand.
- the topics which are considered in the self study (see Chapter 4) should be distributed among the committee members and each member made responsible for the collection of information, the analysis and the evaluation of the situation;
- the draft results should be discussed on as large a scale as possible. It is not necessary for there to be a consensus concerning the report; it is however necessary for as many people as possible to be aware of its contents.

The objectives of the faculty form the starting point for the self evaluation. In any adequately set up self evaluation process the following questions will be addressed:

1. What are the objectives? Are they clear, complete, appropriate and useable? Is there (internal) consensus concerning their interpretation?
2. Are the educational programs related appropriately to the objectives? Are programs and services set up with the achievement of the objectives in mind? Does it appear that they work well? Do any problems arise with their implementation? How can any problems which arise be resolved?
3. Are there adequate means available for the implementation of the programs and services?
4. To what extent are the objectives achieved? How can systematically collected data relating to the extent to which objectives are achieved be used? What is the significance of the data?

The following literature may be referred to concerning the setting up of an internal evaluation:

* Os, W. van (1987), Evaluatie in het hoger onderwijs: controle op en verbetering van de kwaliteit van hoger onderwijs, Groningen: Wolters-Noordhoff ("Evaluation in higher education: the control and the improvement of the quality of higher education")

* Kells, H.R. (1983), Self-Study Processes: A Guide for Postsecondary Institutions.
New York: Macmillan Publishing Company.

* Roe, E. et al (1986), Revieving Academic Performance: Approaches to the Evaluation of Departments and Individuals. St. Lucia: University of Queensland Press.

* Kwaliteitszorg, vaarborg voor kwaliteit in het hoger onderwijs, under the general editorship of G.W. Heijnen, T.H. Joostens & A.I. Vroeijenstijn (eds), Groningen: COWOG ("Quality control, guarantee for quality in higher education")

In addition the faculty may draw upon the expertise available within the Centre for Research and Development of Higher Education (the RWO centre) for the design and setting up of an internal evaluation. Also, the Center for Higher Education Policy Studies of the University of Twente regularly organizes workshops on the setting up and carrying out of self studies.

3.3 Conditions which the self study ought to meet

- The self study is the reporting of the self evaluation. That is to say, the self study is not just descriptive, it is also analytical. It includes an evaluation of the problems. At the same time an indication is given as to how it is thought that problems identified will be dealt with.

- The manner in which self evaluations are carried out can vary; also the levels whom are to be involved in the discussion of the report will differ from one institution to another. Nevertheless, the responsibility for the self study lies in any case with the Faculty Board.

- Since it is the self study which is of the most importance for the visiting committees, and these committees have to study a number of reports, it is important for all the studies to follow the same format. Directions concerning this are given in Chapter 4.

- The self study forms the starting point for the discussions between the visiting committee and the faculty. This implies that everyone who will be concerned in one way or another with the discussions needs to be aware of the contents of the self study.

- The self study should not extend to more than 30 or at a maximum 40 pages, excluding the appendices. Clear reference to any appendices taken up must be made in the main body of the report.

3.4 Quantitative data

At the time of the trial reviews an attempt was made from the bureau of the VSNU to set up a "fact book" whith a series of quantitative data referring to the degree program. That practice is not continued since it turned out to be too difficult to assemble consistent data on a national basis. Instead, the necessary quantitative data form part of the self study. The manner in which this data has been presented has unfortunately often left much to be desired. The committees continue to complain about the lack of comparability of information, while there is a clear need for the standardization of such data as student numbers, establishment of personnel, staff/student ratios, succes rates etc. The committees ask urgently for further attention to be paid to this matter.

In order to obtain uniformly presented data a number of tables have been taken up in appendix 2, and it is indicated how these should be completed. In the checklist, an indication is given after every 'point of attention' involving quantitative data which needs to be reported according to a particular table. It is urgently requested that this should be strictly adhered to.

3.5 Who implements the self study?

A program review needs to have as broad a scope and as high a level of involvement as possible. That means that in most cases several degree programs will be involved with one single review. Considering the fact that it is the self study and self assessment which form the basis of the quality control, for each degree program people will have to carry out an internal evaluation and a strengths / weaknesses analysis according to a checklist. Where more than one degree program within a single faculty is concerned, then it is assumed that for each degree program people will carry out a self evaluation. It is certainly advisable to establish with the faculty coordinator beforehand which topics should be dealt with at faculty level. The faculty coordinator has the responsibility of ensuring that ultimately one single report is presented which includes the self studies of the various degree programs concerned, preceded by a general account from the faculty's perspective.

4. A CHECKLIST FOR THE SELF STUDY

Since there is a close connection between the work of the visiting committee and the self evalution, the form and content of the self study is closely associated with the task of the visiting committee (see article 2.1 of the protocol).

In order to reduce the activities to no more than is necessary it is urgently requested that the arrangement of topics as is given below should be followed, and all the aspects listed should be considered.

In the checklist a number of 'points for attention' are given for each chapter which can be considered as the questions to be addressed by the internal evaluation. If the checklist is followed carefully then it should be possible to arrive successfully in broad outline at a good strengths / weaknesses analysis.

The lists of 'point of attention' are not intended to be followed heedlessly; they should rather be perceived as a manual to ensure that nothing is forgotten. If topics are listed which do not apply to the degree program concerned then that can be indicated with a single comment. If there are topics which require particular emphasis in a certain degree program, then that is also possible.

CHAPTER 1: THE ORGANIZATIONAL SITUATION

The discipline oriented aproach of the external quality control does not always run parallel with the organizational position within the university structure in which the unit to be visited finds itself; it is therefore advisable to commence the self study with a chapter which indicates the structure and place taken up by the faculty / degree program within the university organization, and which reports the subject teams involved with the form the educational program takes.

How is this structure perceived? Does it produce any obstacles tending to reduce quality, or does it work in such a way that the achievement of quality is facilitated?

CHAPTER 2: THE STUDENTS

- The size of the student intake; the total number of students (see tables 1 and 2 in appendix 2)
- The characteristics of the student input (sex, age, geographic origin, previous education / professional experience)
- What has been the development in the student input in the last few years? Have any important shifts been ascertained?
- How are deficiencies in educational preparation avoided? What problems have been encountered in pre-university education? How are deficiencies dealt with?

- what is done with respect to recruitment and publicity?
- what is the extent of succes rates in the first (propaedeutic) year? and in the degree (doctoraal) phase? (See table 3 in appendix 2).

CHAPTER 3: AN OVERVIEW OF THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

3.1 General

'Points for attention'

- Have objectives been formulated for the degree program?
- How are the objectives translated into final student assignments? Has it been laid down what graduates ought to know and be able to do? Are students aware of this?
- Have separate additional objectives been formulated for the different programs?
- How does the degree program present itself in contrast with similar degree programs in other universities?
- To what extent are objectives achieved? Are there any factors which detract from their realization?
- Have plans been made to adapt objectives in view of changed circumstances?
- Have plans been made for the presentation, or the strengthening of the presentation of the profile of the degree program? If so, how is it thought that that might be done?

3.2 The First (Propaedeutic) Year

'Points for attention'

- What is the general design of the first (propaedeutic) year? What subjects are taught? What is the relative amount of the various subjects taught in terms of student study hours?
- Have any requirements been made of the subjects with respect to their mutual interaction?
- Are there any indications of differences between this first year program and that encountered at other institutions?
- Which subjects play a role in the orienting and selective functions of the propaedeutic year? What opinions are held of the orienting, selective and referral functions of the propaedeutic year? How could these be improved?
- Does the propaedeutic year satisfy the requirements made of it by the educational programs which follow it?
- On what basis has the design of the propaedeutic year been arrived at?
- Have any structural changes been made in the educational program in the last few years?

It is requested that a list of the most important literature drawn on in the propaedeutic year should be included as an appendix.

3.3 The Degree ("Doctoraal") Phase

'Points for attention'

- Hov has the degree stage ("doctoraal") leading up to graduation been set up? Can a basic doctoraal program be discerned? What is the relationship with the graduation options?
- What graduation options can be distinguished?
- Hov in general terms are the various graduation options designed? Which core subjects can be distinguished, and which elective subjects?
- What is the extent of the fixed program? What variety do the electives offer? Hov much free space is there?
- The profiles of the various graduation options with respect to those of other institutions; what has led to the present profile of the graduation option? Does the profile satisfy expectations?
- What bottlenecks can be identified within the graduation options?
- The regulation of work experience, long essays and master theses. How is the responsibility of the faculty arranged for students who graduate outside the faculty?

It is requested that for every graduation option a list of the most important literature drawn on in each of the core subjects should be included as an appendix.

3.4 Other education offered

'Points for attention'

- Is there any indication of a program for graduates from higher vocational education (HBO graduates) wishing to enter the university program? Are the programs satisfactory?
- What second phase programs can be distinguished (professional or teacher training programs)?
- What short courses are available?
- What is the situation with respect to service and contract educational provision? Who is responsible for it? Are people satisfied with it? (N.B. the service courses which are presented in other faculties will be considered in the context of the review there; only if the delivery of service courses elsewhere forms a bottleneck for the degree program's own educational provision can it be considered here)
- What is the situation with respect to the education of Ph.D. students (AIO education)? What is the throughput to the second phase? Does the level of the throughput fit with expectations?
- Is there provision for post-doctoraal education?
- Is there provision for part time study in the degree program?
- If so, in what ways does the part time course differ from the full time program in terms of design and courses on offer?

- What instructional methodes are utilized in the acquisition and transfer of knowledge (the size of the lectures, the design of working groups, practicals and so forth)? Are there educational methodes which would be preferred but which cannot be used because of the circumstances of the situation (for example large numbers of students)? To what extent does this influence quality?
- In what ways are computers made use of in the educational program?
- Has the program been set up didactically so that it is possible to complete it within the prescribed time without undue difficulty? If there are any bottlenecks, where do they occur?
- Are there any bottlenecks which can be identified, for example in the transfer from the highly structured propaedeutic year (or foundation program) to the more loosely organized doctoraal phase (or graduation program), work experience, disserations? Can factors which delay student success be identified?
- How are students assessed? a) In what ways (multiple choice, open questions)? b) When are they assessed (within or at the end of a course)? Do the questions represent the final student objectives which have been laid down? How are resits organized?

In the appendix there should also be a list of the titles of the last 25 master theses which students have submitted, and which were found to be satisfactory, with an indication of the grades awarded.

CHAPTER 5: THE ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT OF EDUCATION

5.1 Educational Policy

'Points for attention'

- In what ways is educational policy put into practice? What committees are involved? Is the manner in which the degree program's committee functions found to be satisfactory?
- Is policy with respect to the degree program coupled to that of the institution? Are they linked up with development plans?

5.2 Personnel policy

'Points for attention'

- What is the number of personnel (see table 4 in appendix 2)? Are there any problems in the personnel establishment? Age distribution? Are any vacancies difficult to fill? How many of the staff have their doctorates (see table 4 in appendix 2)?
- What policy is followed with respect to the allotment of academic staff to education and research? Is a conscious choice made of lecturers for the first (propaedeutic) year? How is that related to the teaching load? The student / staff ratio?

- How much time is spent on service education for other faculties?
- Is there any policy with respect to the allotment of lecturers to informal lectures, to supervision of essays / master theses, practicals and work experience?
- What role do didactic qualifications or educational activities play in the furtherance of one's academic career?
- Are there any factors which can be identified as having a negative effect on personnel policy?

5.3 Student load, student progress, student counselling and advice concerning continuation of the study

'Points for attention'

- Has any measurement been made in the last few years of the student load in either the first (propaedeutic) year or the degree (doctoraal) phase? If so, what were the results? How many hours do students expend on their studies?
- Have the results led to any measures being taken in terms of the rearrangement of the educational program and / or student guidance?
- Is student progress registered? How is that carried out?
- Does the registration of progess lead to the timely signalling of problems? When is contact first made with problem cases? Does this lead to remedial and / or preventive action with respect to either the individual students or to the arrangement of the program?
- Has any research been undertaken into the causes of the overrunning of the time prescribed for the completion of courses? If so, what were the findings? What measures were taken as a result?
- How is the study advice service (informing students of their ability to continue their studies) set up? Does it function satisfactorily?
- How is student guidance and counselling set up?
- What is done in terms of dissemination of information
  a) for student applicants;
  b) in the course of the study; and
  c) in career preparation? Is this provided at central (faculty) or at decentralized (subject team) level?

5.4 The material environment

'Points for attention'

- What is the situation concerning material educational provision (lecture rooms, rooms for practicals etc); do they meet requirements?
- What is the situation concerning laboratories?
- What is the situation concerning libraries?
- What is the situation concerning computer equipment?
- How large is the educational budget for the degree program? What percentage of the budget is earmarked for material provision? Is it possible to say what the average costs per student are?

5.5 Interaction between central and faculty levels

'Points for attention'

- What is the interaction between the faculty and the Executive Board of the University with respect to educational provision, in particular with the facilitation of quality?
- How does the educational policy of the faculty relate to the educational policy of the institution as a whole?
- Does the faculty profit in any way from provisions related to the facilitation of quality which emanate from the central level?

CHAPTER 6: INTERNAL QUALITY CONTROL

'Points for attention'

- In what way has internal quality control been put into practice?
- How is a 'finger held on the pulse'?
- Is there systematic evaluation? If so, in what way is it done? How are students involved with the evaluation of education? What is done with the results? Is any feedback given to the students?
- In what way is the renewal of education attended to? How are educational support services arranged? Is there cooperation with the centre for the research and development of higher education (RWO centre)? If so, in what manner? What is the opinion of the educational support services?
- In what way is attention given to the professionalization of the academic staff (management courses, educational / didactic training)?

CHAPTER 7: THE GRADUATES

'Points for attention'

- Have demands been formulated by the employment field which graduates must satisfy? How is that attended to? Is there any indication of clear professional profiles? Have any changes taken place in the course of time?
- Is it known where graduates find employment?
- What is the situation concerning graduate unemployment?
- Are there any contacts with alumni?
- What is the opinion of alumni with respect to the educational program?
- Are there any structural or informal contacts with the employment field?
- What policy is there to adjust the educational program to the employment market as far as that is possible?

APPENDICES

The appendices need to be restricted in number to those which are most strictly necessary. Should any appendices be taken up, then their relevance must be made clear where appropriate in the main body of the text.

In any case however, the following appendices need to be included:

a) a list of the names of the academic staff with the following data: title; name; specialization, responsible for education in: .....;
b) a list of the literature drawn upon in the first (propaedeutic) year;
c) a list of the literature drawn upon in the core subjects of the graduation options;
d) a list of the last 25 master theses submitted and found to be satisfactory, together with the grades awarded;
e) a list of the most important papers concerning the degree program (such as educational reports, development plans, evaluation reports, educational policy plans etc.) so that the visiting committee may peruse these should they wish to do so.

5. THE VISITING COMMITTEE

5.1 Nomination and appointment

General

Following the formal announcement of the review according to article 2.3 of the protocol, the appropriate VSNU-Disciplinary Board (DOO: "discipline-overlegorgaan") under which the degree program falls is asked to put forward names of experts who could be appointed to the committee. In order for the review to be successful it is essential for the whole discipline to have confidence in the committee.

In establishing the composition of the committee the criteria in article 2.2 of the protocol need to be taken into account. A visiting committee consists of about seven people. This is because of the distribution of the activities and the possibility of temporary unavailability of any committee member. In the enlisting of experts an effort needs to be made to cover the specializations within a subject as fully as possible. This is particularly so where a number of (sub) disciplines are combined. The experts are sought in part from within the university world and in part from the employment field which takes up the graduates and, insofar as that exists, from within the professional association. In seeking experts within the academic world it is advisable not only to look for emeriti but also to choose experts who are still active. A balanced distribution is desirable. Further it is important that one of the members (preferably the chairperson) should have specific expertise and experience with respect to the functioning of the university.

Considering that, to date, attention is concentrated solely on the educational program, the availability of knowledge concerning educational processes and educational design is also of importance.
It is also assumed in the protocol that the committee should include at least one foreign expert in the field.

The following formation can be considered as a suggestion for the possible composition of a visiting committee:

- A chairperson, not working in one of the faculties to be visited. S/he does not need to be an expert in the field, but should have the confidence of those who are. If possible the chairperson should have experience with the university (management) structure and the developments that have taken place in the last few years.

- 1 expert in the field who has been active in the subject area, but has now retired;

- 1 expert, still active in the field, whether or not in the faculties to be visited (such a member does not take part in the visit to his/her own faculty);

- 2 experts in the field from the employment area taking up graduates and/or from the professional association;

- An expert from abroad, either Dutch but working outside the Netherlands, or a foreigner who is familiar with the Dutch situation. (If it is not a question of the expressly chosen international composition of a committee, then the foreign committee member must have a command of the Dutch language.)

- 1 expert in the field of education / learning processes. An expert from the area of research and development of higher education may be considered, or an expert in the teaching of the subject.

In case it is the view within the discipline that an international committee ought to be set up, then a number of the places listed for subject experts may be taken up by foreign experts.

The secretariat of the committee is taken care of by the Bureau of the VSNU.

Proposal VSNU-Disciplinary Board (D00)

Bearing these criteria in mind, the VSNU-Disciplinary Board formulates a proposal for the Executive Board of the VSNU. The proposal consists of a list of at least seven names, and the VSNU-Disciplinary Board proposes a chairperson. The chairperson of the VSNU-Disciplinary Board is asked to ascertain beforehand the readiness of the proposed committee members to serve, without however entering into any commitment. With respect to the suggested chairperson the VSNU-Disciplinary Board takes up contact with the VSNU before consulting him/her. The Secretary of the VSNU-Disciplinary Board sends the nomination to the Chairperson of the VSNU. The nomination consists of the following personalia of the persons concerned;
- name and title;
- address and telephone number;
- a short curriculum vitae.

In case the people concerned are in principle prepared to accept nomination, then the names of the first nominees will suffice. Where there is any doubt a number of reserve names need to be included.

The Executive Board ("DB")

The Executive Board of the VSNU considers the proposal of the VSNU-Disciplinary Board. Should there be any reason not to take up the proposal of the VSNU-Disciplinary Board, the Executive Board contacts the chairperson of the VSNU-Disciplinary Board. Should the VSNU-Disciplinary Board not be able to put forward a complete proposal within six weeks, then the Executive Board can itself fill the nominations. As soon as the Executive Board has set up the nomination list, the chairperson of the VSNU contacts the proposed members.

In order to estimate the time needed for the work of a review it can roughly be assumed that 4 or 5 days per arranged visit (including all preparatory meetings, reading, reporting etc) are required. After accep-

tance by the members the committee is convened and notice of the decision is sent to the following:

- the chairperson and members of the visiting committee;
- the Executive Boards of the universities;
- the faculty bureaus concerned;
- the chairperson of the VSNU-Disciplinary Board concerned;
- the Inspectorate for Higher Education;
- the organizations where the various committee members work.

5.2 The task

In article 2.1 of the protocol the remit of the committee is formulated as follows:

a) to form an opinion on the basis of information supplied by the faculty and by means of discussions held on the spot about the standard of education and the quality of the educational process, including the organisation of education and the standard of the graduates; in assessing quality, the committee must look at the requirements-/expectations of the student, the faculty/discipline and society, and prospective employers in particular;

b) to make suggestions on quality improvement.

A number of terms in this remit require further exposition:

> "... to <u>form an opinion</u> concerning the <u>quality</u> of the <u>educational provision</u> ..."

<u>Forming an opinion</u>

The committee is requested to form an opinion. The concept 'form an opinion' ought not to be interpreted as 'sitting in judgment and handing out a sentence in terms of 'good' or 'bad' ". Neither is it a matter of approval of an educational program; the committee is not directed to accreditation or program recognition.

Although the committee will certainly make comparisons between different degree programs for its own purposes, and in its final report a comparative evaluation can be given, it is not the intention that the committee should set up a rank order of the faculties visited.

The aim of the educational visit is rather to follow up through dialogue with the faculty the points of strength and of weakness indicated in the self study. The committee can, as a group of expert outsiders, hold up a mirror to the faculty.

The starting point for the committee is the objectives which the degree program has formulated for itself. Here it is impossible to evade the question as to whether these objectives conform with those generally accepted to be appropriate for a particular program, certainly when the

programs concerned have a civil effect, be it on the ground of legal provisions or in actual fact. Neither will the scholarship of the educational program escape attention. Comparisons with courses abroad will also have their place.

The fact that the committee does not pass a sentence is not to say that it cannot make critical comments. Obscure, cryptic, or occluded language should be avoided in the interests of the credibility of the system. What is needed is fair criticism without sentence.

Quality

'Quality' is a concept which eludes simple definition. A fairly useful definition of quality is: 'the extent to which the pre-formulated objectives are achieved' (De Groot 1986). Another definition proposes that quality is equivalent to 'the extent to which a product satisfies the requirements laid down'. This rather suggests that the concept 'quality' takes on a meaning dependent upon whoever lays down the objectives or the requirements. The different interested parties will each define quality for themselves, in accordance with the objectives they set for themselves. These can run parallel to each other, but they may be contradictory. The quality of an educational program, considered from the point of view of the 'client', for example, the employment field, means in the first instance the quality of a graduate. A student will however be more inclined to consider the quality of the design and delivery of the educational program. From the perspective of the discipline attention will primarily be given to the demands made of a graduate and on the expectations of the students; but in addition other specific demands will be made - for example, that the educational program must keep track of recent developments in the field. In fact 'the' quality cannot be discussed, although qualities or aspects of quality may be. This means that visiting committees have to be involved with a range of quality requirements in their work:

- what are the requirements of a 'client' in the employment field who will take on the graduates:
- what are the demands made by the students following the educational program, and what are their expectations;
- and what are the demands made on the educational program by developments within the discipline itself?

The Standards of Education

The quality of the educational program is determined by a number of factors. In the first place it is strongly dependent on the quality of the lecturers and the manner in which knowledge is transferred. This is difficult to judge at first hand without spending a great deal of time in lectures and seminars. Indirectly, an opinion can be formed by drawing on the comments of students with respect to the educational provision, the extent to which the lecturers are able to receive didactic training, and the extent to which didactic qualities are taken into account in the appointment and promotion of staff.

The quality of the educational program is further determined by the content and the level of the subject matter taught. The content is again strongly dependent on the objectives, and the manner in which these are translated into final student assignments. To a certain extent the course description gives some insight into the course content. Questions which can be asked concerning this are related to the consistency of the program, the underlying philosophy (why has this program in fact been chosen?). Are the program elements necessary for practice in the professional field included? Does the program conform with recent developments in the discipline? Is the educational program of a sufficiently high scholastic level? Does the content of the educational program satisfy the requirements of occupation and profession? In order to form an overall view of the educational level of the program the committee members will have to continue to collect and place together the separate pieces of a jig saw puzzle. The necessary knowledge can be accumulated from the study of the following:

- the literature lists for the first year (propaedeutic) and degree (doctoraal) phases;
- student master theses;
- tests and examination questions;
- course descriptions and readers.

The experts in the committee are expressly chosen so that, on the basis of the available information, they will be able to form a picture of the content and level of the educational program in a very short time.

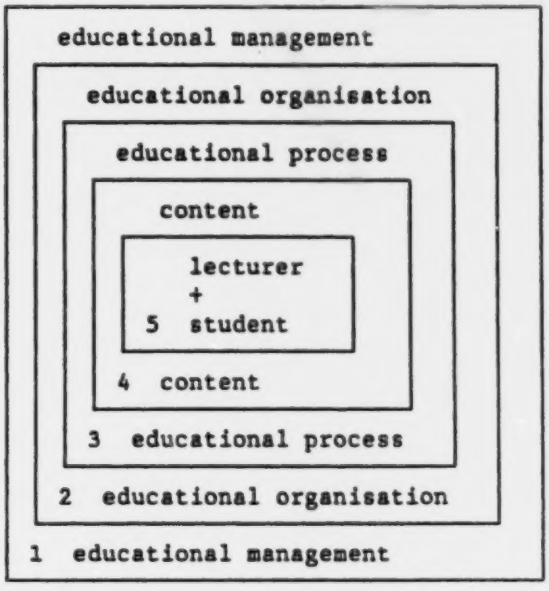
The educational process

Other than through the direct transfer of knowledge, content and level, the quality of the educational program is also determined by the educational process. Apart from considering an individual teacher, it can be seen whether in general the most appropriate instructional methods are used for transfer of knowledge to the students. Has the program been so set up that it can be completed by a student in the prescribed time without too many difficulties? How has the first year (propaedeutic) been built up? The degree (doctoraal) phase? Are there unnecessary bottlenecks? Does the program match up with the reasonable expectations of students?

Educational organization and educational management

The given restraints and educational policy also determine the quality of the educational program. What are the conditions under which the degree program must give shape to the educational process? What is the relationship between teaching and research? What is the situation concerning the study load? What policy is followed with respect to education? An important aspect of educational organization and management is the structural quality control. In what ways are these attended to? What is done as a result of evaluations?

The different factors which determine the quality of the educational program can be represented as a series of concentric layers:



How deep ought a committee to dig? Taking into account the restraints within which the visiting committee has to work, there is conflict between on the one hand taking a deep look at the educational provision and getting to the core of the matter, and on the other hand looking down from a higher level of abstraction (educational process, educational organization, educational management). The expectation is that if the first three layers are peeled off and these look healthy enough, then it can be assumed that the fourth layer is equally sound; and certainly if a glimpse of the fourth layer can be seen. Should the first layers display some bad or rotten patches, then, even if it is only possible to drill down and take a sample, the committee will in any case have to get to the heart of the matter.

The greater the number of degree programs in the committee's remit, the greater will be the conflict. If there are several degree programs it is not possible for a visiting committee, within the given restraints, to go deeply into the content. The committee will have to establish on the basis of a meticulous scrutiny of the self study reports which of the degree programs need an examination in depth and which can be considered from the organization process and management aspects alone. The committee will however take a sample now and again and carry out a study in depth in a degree program, even though there is no indication that it is necessary.

Criteria and Points to be Raised

One of the first questions which can be put concerning visiting committees is: 'What are the criteria to which they work?'

With reference to an evaluation of quality there are two questions which are of importance:

The first question is: can quality be quantified? Opinions are divided. It is evident that, where people try to derive quality directly from quantitative data, differences of interpretation will arise. Consider, for example, the measurement of the quality of research. Is the total number of publications a true measure of quality? The analysis of information and experience gained elsewhere indicate that that is not unequivocally the case. Another example which refers to education: the interpretation of pass/fail data. Is a high success rate an indication of quality, or is it rather an measure of reduction of standards?

The problem concerning the quantification of quality makes it necessary to consider quantitative and qualitative data interactively. Further, conclusions cannot be drawn from quantitative data on their own. The results must first be the subject of discussion and dialogue.

The second question is: can standards be set for quality? It will already be clear that it is not quality as such, but rather aspects of quality which should be discussed; and, where there are different demands and paymasters, it is impossible to speak of one set of norms. There are several systems of standards and criteria against which quality has to be set. It is evident that quality control must have an anchor point. Standards and criteria can be derived from the objectives and/ or the demands which are pre-formulated or required by those who pay attention to quality. This means that the government, which concerns itself with the testing of the calibre of an educational program from the perspective of its objectives will formulate different standards and criteria than, for example, the employers will. And just as the requirements made with respect to the quality of education can diverge, so can the standards which are applied to measure it.

The objectives formulated by the faculty form the starting point for the visiting committee. Implicitly, academics know very well what good education is, or ought to be, and what it may be expected that a graduate should know. Explicitly, however, the criteria need to be reflected in the objectives and final assignments which are laid down for an educational program. A visiting committee should attempt to make more explicit the implicit ideas over what makes up a good educational program and a well educated graduate.

Although a list of standards and criteria may not be available beforehand, it can nevertheless be said quite clearly what a committee ought to consider. From experience with reviews to date it is evident that the following topics require attention:

- the objectives and final assignments and the translation of these into the curriculum;

- the articulation of secondary school / university education and the problem of deficiencies;

- the selection and orientation functions of the propaedeutic year. How do these work? What is the situation concerning the advice function related to continuing / discontinuing the study after the propaedeutic year?

- the transfer from the (frequently strictly organized) propaedeutic year to the (more freely organized) doctoraal phase. Is there a risk of students falling behind in this transfer?

- the structure of the curriculum: its coherence, the order in which the subjects, etc are taken; depth as opposed to breadth;

- the intensity of the programs; are the programs so set up that the average student can complete them successfully in the available time? What is the situation concerning drop out and delay?

- the manner in which the curriculum has been brought about and the responsibility for it;

- the relationship between a broad as opposed to a specialized education;

- the place of the master thesis, work experience, graduation project. What place do these occupy in the program? What is the nature of the supervision?

- what is the situation concerning student advising, student guidance and counselling, recording and registration of student progress?

- articulation between educational program and society; employment prospects for graduates;

- education and research as warp and weft. Are the latest scholastic developments integrated into the educational program? In what ways do students come into contact with research? What role does research play in the educational program?

- the internal quality control. Is there a good evaluation system? What is done with the results it produces?

5.3 The preparations made by the visiting committee for the visits

The visiting committee should meet together as soon as possible after it is appointed. At the first meeting the VSNU gives further information concerning the review process and indicates what is expected from the committee.

In the latter part of the day the members of the visiting committee exchange ideas concerning the task, how to make explicit topics to be raised and the distribution of the topics among the committee members.

Further it is established what information remains to be asked for. The available time is also used to set up a draft timetable of the visits (with the assumption that there will be one visit every two weeks).

After the first meeting a further meeting is arranged by the chairperson and secretary of the committee with the members of the VSNU-Disciplinary Board to which the degree program belongs. The coordinators appointed by the faculties are also invited to this meeting. This meeting is intended for the further discussion of the task and the committee's conception of it. At the same time points to which the committee should pay particular attention can be put forward. Further the draft time table can be submitted. The arrangements which may be agreed to at this time should be confirmed in writing by the chairperson and secretary as soon as possible and conveyed to the faculties and the committee members.

The faculties have to present the self study at least one month prior to the first visit of the visiting committee. After consideration of the self studies the visiting committee meets together in order to discuss them. The committee analyses the self studies and on the basis of the different elements formulates the questions which they will pose. Where a committee is concerned with several degree programs in its remit then, on the basis of the self studies, it is decided how best the various degree programs can be approached. On the basis of the self studies the committee puts forward a draft program.

5.4 Formulation of the program

The secretary makes contact with the coordinator in the faculty as soon as possible after the last preparatory meeting. Logistical arrangements are made in broad outline. At the same time further appointments are made concerning the visit and the secretary sets up a program for the visit in consultation with the coordinator.

5.5 The visit

In principle the visit to a faculty lasts for two days. Previous committees have found it most useful to meet together on the evening prior to a visit. This evening can be used in order to meet the chairperson of the Executive Board of the university and the chairperson of the Faculty Board. The chairperson of the visiting committee acts as host and invites the members of the board either to an informal dinner or to a short meeting at which the committee gives a short introduction concerning the committee's conceptions of its task and its manner of working. At the same time the opportunity is used to go through the timetable once more with the faculty coordinator.

In the course of previous reviews the custom has grown up for the Faculty Boards to act as hosts on the evening of the first day and to invite the members of the committee to dinner.

The plan of the program is left to the judgment of the committee. Experience suggests however that the visit can best be commenced by discussions with members of the faculty board and the author(s) of the self study. After that, there should be discussions with members of the degree program committee, followed by discussions with lecturers, students, study coordinators and so forth. Should it be deemed necessary as a result of these later discussions, a second discussion can possibly be set up with the faculty board and / or the degree program committee at the end of the second day.

The visiting committee should also exchange views with groups of students (for the involvement of students with the program review see also 6.6). There will thus be discussions with a group of about ten first year (propaedeutic) students, a group of students from the doctoraal phase (also about ten), and with the Ph.D. students (AIO's). The composition of the student group requires special attention. The panels should be assembled in cooperation with the coordinator and the secretary. Where possible the study or student associations should be brought in.

5.6 The report

Taking into account the variety of the functions that a visiting committee fulfils (to be summarized as giving feedback to the faculty and the furnishing of a contribution in accountabillity concerning the quality of the educational program), careful consideration must be given to the reporting. A distinction has therefore to be made between:

The Verbal Report

The visiting committee will in any case report their findings verbally at the end of each visit. This will for the most part be directed to the giving of feedback to the faculty / degree program. As many of the people concerned as possible should be present at the giving of this feedback: the Executive Board of the University (CvB), Faculty Board, Degree program Committee and so forth. The verbal reporting should be viewed as a first reaction to the main points and not as a carefully thought out, all inclusive judgment from the committee.

If several degree programs are involved in the same review, then the committee will just make one verbal report to the faculty board and will not make a separate report to each degree program.

The Written Report

On conclusion of all the visits the visiting committee brings out a report that is presented to the Governing Board (Bestuurlijk Overleg) of the VSNU. The Council makes the report public. Besides providing feedback, this report sets out a balance sheet representing the state of affairs within the university concerned and in the discipline / degree program viewed as a whole.

Considering its public nature the visiting committee is asked to arrange the report according to a specific model. The contents will be arranged in broad outline be as follows:

Introduction: the remit and the terms of reference of the committee; the composition of the committee

Chapter 1 the findings of the visit to the faculty X of university X, if necessary further subdivided into:
- the findings in degree program a;
- the findings in degree program b etc.

Chapter 2 the findings of the visit to the faculty Y of university Y, if necessary further subdivided into:
- the findings in degree program a;
- the findings in degree program b etc.

A general overview of the discipline / degree program in its entirety precedes or follows the findings per faculty. General conclusions and recommendations will be included here. The report will end with a short evaluation of the way the review progressed.

For each faculty the reporting will be presented according to the same pattern. In any case the following topics will be dealt with:

1 General description of the degree program visited

This section has as its goal the portrayal of the degree program for an outsider. There will be a description of the program and the specializations in which students may graduate in very general terms. Inclusion of quantitative data: numbers of students, pass / fail percentages, staffing and so forth. Further, a description of the organizational situation of the degree program.

2 The objectives

Have objectives been formulated? What do they comprise? How do they relate to objectives formulated elsewhere, and how do they relate to the expectations of the employment field (how does the degree program portray itself?) How are the objectives translated into final assignments? And how are they reflected in the curriculum?

3 Educational design and the educational process

The development of the programs (first year (propaedeutic) and degree (doctoraal) phases): what graduation options are there? Are they set up according to educational principles? Is completion of the program in the prescribed time feasible? What is the student success rate?
Are there any particular bottlenecks in the program? The selective and orientation functions of the propaedeutic year. The master thesis, work experience stage and / or practicals; are they bottlenecks or not? What is the articulation between first year (propaedeutic) and degree (doctoraal) phases? How are students assessed?

4 Educational organization

Is there any indication of a formulated educational policy? In what ways is it put into effect? What role do the various committees play? Are faculty and institutional policy consistent?
Personnel policy; study load; the allocation of staff to the different phases.
Student progress, guidance and counselling and the advice function.
The material restraints of the working environment.

5 The internal quality control

What is done internally in terms of quality control? Are there good evaluation systems in place? What is done with their results? Are the students involved in evaluation procedures? Opinion concerning the self study which has been carried out.

6 Graduates

Are the objectives of the educational program indeed achieved? Do the graduates fulfil the requirements made of them by the professional field? Is there any indication of definite professional profiles? Is it known where the graduates are taken up? Is there substantial graduate unemployment?

7 International comparisons

Are there international contacts? Is there any indication of student exchanges and so forth? How does the subject stand within a comparative international framework?

8 Strengths / weaknesses analysis of the degree program

9 Conclusions and recommendations

In the treatment of the various topics a clear distinction must be made between description and opinion. The following arrangement can be borne in mind for each topic:

Topic

a. Description of the situation, such as for example some topic which is brought up in the self study.
b. What is the view expressed in the self study?
c. What are the findings /opinions/ judgment expressed by the committee?
d: Recommendations.

The points summarized must in any case be dealt with. The framework put forward does not prevent a visiting committee adding further points to be raised, should that be desired.

Before the visiting committee presents its report to the Governing Board (Bestuurlijk Overleg), a draft version (of those parts which are the concern of the faculty) as well as the general section should be sent to the Faculty Board with the request to amend any factual errors. A copy is also sent to the Executive Board of the University (CvB).

If no difference of opinion occurs with respect to any factual inaccuracies which may arise, then the committee should adapt the report to take these points into account. But the borderline between the opinion of a faculty concerning 'factual inaccuracies' and 'coming to an opinion other than that of the committee' cannot always be defined sharply. Should a faculty wish to do so, a reaction from the faculty can be included in the report as an appendix.

6 THE FACULTY

6.1 Faculty or degree program

The discipline directed design of the program review does not always run parallel with the organizational placement within the university of the degree program concerned; sometimes a degree program is also a faculty, sometimes a subject team (vakgroep). Usually several subject groups are concerned with the implementation of the educational program of the degree program concerned. It is the degree program X, in whatever organizational context it may be set, which is attended to by the visiting committee. And it is the Board of the Faculty under which the degree program falls which is responsible for the preparation and running of the visit. Should there be any question concerning what is expected from a faculty within the context of a review, then it is the activities of the degree program to be visited under the auspices of the faculty which are meant.

6.2 The coordinator

It is set down in article 3.1 of the protocol that, as soon as the faculty has been informed of the anticipated review, a coordinator is appointed. From the reviews that have taken place to date it would appear that certain criteria need to be taken into account:

- it is important that the coordinator to be appointed should have good relationships with the faculty and degree program as a whole, with the Board of the Faculty as well as with individual lecturers;

- it is important that the coordinator to be appointed should have easy access to the Bureau of the Faculty;

- the coordinator must be able to set up arrangements with the visiting committee with authority.

Since the coordinator will be responsible for the smooth running of the review it is advisable for the coordinator also to be involved with (the implementation of) the internal evaluation which leads to the self study; and it is also advisable to have the coordinator be chairperson of the evaluation / self study committee.

The coordinator is also the person with whom the Secretary of the visiting committee will take up contact in order to arrange the program for the visit. S/he is also contact person for the visiting committee and, should it be necessary, for the staff member of the VSNU bureau who is concerned with the external quality control (see 7.2).

FInally, the coordinator has an important part to play in (seeing to) the communication of information to staff and students (see 6.6).

6.3 Information necessary for the purposes of the visiting committee

The most important information for the visiting committee is the self study. In addition to that, the faculty is expected to send the Study Guide to the visiting committee. Ten copies of the self study and the Study Guide are sent to the Secretary of the committee or to the VSNU coordinator. The educational report of the faculty has yet to become a universal tradition. Should there be such in the faculty concerned, copies of the most recent report should also be sent.

The visiting committee can let it be known should supplementary information be required, or that it should be made available for their perusal on the spot. This is a matter of recent evaluation reports of (parts of) the program, faculty development plans, examples of master theses, lecture notes, photocopied articles, lecture handouts for students and workbooks prepared for student use. The faculty decides with the Secretary which materials should be sent, and which should be made available for perusal at the time of the review. Where for example examination material or master theses are concerned, these materials need to be handled confidentially and, should they be sent to the review, they have to be carefully returned.

6.4 The self study

The setting up of the self study is discussed in detail in Chapters 3 and 4. It is no doubt superfluous to point out once more that it is the self study, based on an internal evaluation, which forms the hinge linking the internal and the external quality control. The greater the extent to which internal evaluation becomes a regular activity within the faculty, and the writing of a faculty educational report becomes a habit, the less will be the intensity of the activity demanded for the setting up of a self study.

It is inevitable that, in the writing of the self study, there will be some conflict between tactics and candour. There will be a temptation to make a 'public relations' document of the self study. This will only have a negative effect on the smooth running of the review, since the committee will be obliged to spend time cutting through the trappings, and that will be at the cost of the time available for a dialogue.

Since the report of the visiting committee is public, and the committee will refer to the self study, the visiting committee will consider the self study to be a public document.

6.5 Preparation for the review

* **Meeting for the faculties concerned with the review**

In order to prepare for the visit, the VSNU organizes a meeting for all the degree programs concerned as soon as possible after the educational visit is formally announced. It is of the utmost importance that both staff and students in the faculty should be properly informed of the purposes and the progress of the review. The coordinator will have to pay particular attention to this. The meeting is primarily directed to the provision of

further information concerning the visit and what the expectations are. The time is really too short to go more deeply into the manner and style of the self study. For this the Centre for Studies in Higher Education Policy in the University of Twente (CSHOB) may be drawn on.

A good way to ascertain the aims and procedures of the review is to contact a faculty which has already been evaluated.

* **Contact between Secretary and Coordinator**

The Secretary of the visiting committee will contact the coordinator as soon as possible in order to discuss the logistic arrangements necessary for the visit. A program is set up in consultation with the Secretary.

6.6 Student involvement

The involvement of the students in the review process is of the greatest importance. Their opinion concerning the quality of their educational provision needs to be taken up by the visiting committee as carefully as possible. The faculty must see to it that the students are well informed about the review and are actively involved in it. The contribution of the students can take place in a number of different ways:

- Through a good system of internal quality control the participation of students is ensured in the established student evaluations of their educational provision. The presence of these and the results should be taken up in the self study.
- It is advisable also to involve students in the self evaluation.
- In the course of the visit, discussions will take place with the faculty board and the degree program committee, in both of which students are also represented.
- Further to that, discussions can take place with groups of first year and doctoraal (first phase) students.
- The study association within the degree program must be encouraged to participate in the review.
- Should the students consider that their voices are not sufficiently attended to in the self study, they should be offered the opportunity of putting their own evaluation into writing for the purposes of the visiting committee.

6.7 The visit

The visiting committee proposes a timetable for the review and puts this forward for the faculties. Only the most weighty objections can lead to the alteration of the date of the proposed visit.

For the procedures during the visit see 5.5

With respect to the program it needs to be said that this is set up in consultation between the visiting committee and the faculty. Once the program has been set up, then the visiting committee may only diverge from it for the most compelling reasons. It is however established in the

protocol that it is ultimately the visiting committee which determines the program and decides with whom discussions will be held.

Whatever costs are incurred by the faculty for the preparation and servicing of the visit are to be borne by the faculty, with the exception of the travel and accommodation costs of the committee members.

6.8 The report

For the procedures concerning the report, see 5.6. The draft version of (a part of) the report is sent to the Faculty Board and the Executive Board of the University. From the faculty it is expected that any factual inaccuracies will be reported to the committee within 14 days.

Should the faculty wish to react to the report other than to point out factual inaccuracies, then this is brought to the attention of the committee. The faculty ought to make it clear if it is their wish that the reaction should be included in the final report as an appendix.

6.9 The follow up to the review

What finally happens with the results of the reviews is in the first instance a matter for the faculty and university concerned. It has however been agreed in the HO-Kamer (Higher Education advice committee to the Ministry) that the universities should make clear in their educational development plans and their educational reports what has or will be done with the recommendations.

7. THE VSNU AND THE QUALITY CONTROL

7.1 The timetable of the review

The review system has been set up following a joint decision of the universities in the Netherlands. It is the Governing Board (BO: Bestuurlijk Overleg) of the VSNU which commissions a visiting committee.
The Governing Board has set up a timetable of reviews for the period 1988 - 1992 (see article 4.3 in the protocol). Reference should be made to the publication "Rooster voor onderwijsvisitaties en indeling der studierichtingen naar visitatiecommissie" (Timetable of External Program Review and the distribution of degree programs among visiting committees) (VSNU, July 1989) for the timetable and distribution of the degree programs among the visiting committees.

In contrast with the timetable 1988-1992, which assumed a five year cycle, the timetable has now been amended to spread the visits for 1992 over 1992 and 1993 in order to set up a six year cycle (see the timetable in appendix 5).

The faculty is formally apprised of the impending review in about May of the preceding year, and the VSNU-Disciplinary Board is requested to put forward names for the visiting committee. The period from May to December is then available for the implementation of the self study (although it transpires that many faculties commence that earlier).

The actual visits can take place in the following year.

An endeavour is made to arrange for visits to take place every two or three weeks, so that the complete review (including the reporting of it) can be completed in about six months.

7.2 Responsibility of the VSNU

The Governing Board of the VSNU commissions the program reviews. The Bureau of the VSNU is responsible for their coordination. A process coordinator has been appointed within the bureau of the VSNU for that purpose. Among other tasks, he is responsible for the preparatory activities for the reviews, the notification of the faculties, the direction of the visiting committee and the guidance of the secretaries. Should there be any questions which a faculty or visiting committee wishes to put concerning the review process, then contact should be made with the process coordinator.

7.3 Contact with the Inspectorate

From the side of the VSNU there is regular consultation with the Inspectorate concerning the progress of the external quality control. The inspectorate has the task of a meta-evaluation of the program reviews; that is to say, an evaluation of the manner in which the program review has taken place.

7.4 The Appeals Committee

Should any problems arise in the course of the reviews, such as differences of opinion between the visiting committee and the faculty, then both the faculty and the visiting committee have the right to request the The Governing Board of the VSNU to set up an appeals committee that has the confidence of both parties. The appeals committee operates immediately. Should the committee be unable to resolve the difference, then it is decided by the The Governing Board.

PROTOCOL

FOR

EXTERNAL QUALITY ASSESSMENT

UNDER THE RESPONSIBILITY OF

THE ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITIES IN THE NETHERLANDS (VSNU)

Laid down by the Governing Board on 4 November 1988

PREAMBLE

The reason for setting up a system of external quality assessment is given in the policy document Higher Education: Autonomy and Quality (HOAK-nota, Ministry of Education and Science, 1985), in which the universities were granted greater autonomy and greater freedom in designing programmes. The minister pointed to the need for a guarantee of the quality of education and for the monitoring of quality. To this end, the 1986 University Education Act provided for an Inspectorate for Higher Education. In April 1986, in the consultations between the minister and the institutions of Higher Education, the conclusion was reached that quality monitoring is, in the first instance, the responsibility of the institutions. They would therefore have to provide a coordinated external system of quality monitoring.
This led the joint universities to set up a system of external quality assessment.

In the draft proposal for the Higher Education and Scientific Research Act (Ministry of Education and Science, 1988), article 12 states: "The Executive Board of the institution shall be responsible, as far as possible in collaboration with other institutions, for providing regular assessment, carried out in part by independent experts, of the quality of the work of the institutions. In so far as these assessments are carried out in part by independent experts, the findings shall be public".

A system based on committees of external experts was tested from September 1987 to September 1988. During the trial, a protocol drawn up by the HOAK Steering Committee (HOAK-stuurgroep, 1986) was tested. After evaluation of the project (VSNU, 1988), it was decided to continue the system of external quality assessment, to which end the following protocol was laid down.

A discipline-oriented approach was selected for the trial so that it would be possible to link up at a later stage with the monitoring of the quality of research being carried out under Conditional Financing. The results of the trial gave no reason to depart from the discipline-oriented approach. For the time being, external quality assessment will in principle be concerned only with education. The protocol therefore refers to quality assessment aimed at education.

1. THE PURPOSE AND PROCESS OF EXTERNAL QUALITY ASSESSMENT

1.1. The purpose

External quality assessment complements the attention already devoted to the quality of education within the institutions.

The purpose of external quality assessment is:

a) to obtain, by means of an exchange of ideas between the committee of external experts and faculty/discipline, insight into the quality of the education and to contribute to quality management;
b) to account for the level of education to the outside world.

1.2. A broad description of the process

The process of external quality assessment incorporates the following phases:

1. the preparation:

- appointment of visiting committee for each discipline;
- appointment of coordinators in the faculties;
- internal discussion of visiting committee;
- informative contact between committee and faculty;
- internal evaluation and compilation of a self-study by the faculty to be visited.

2. the visits:

- the visiting committee makes a two-day visit to the faculty concerned;
- the discussions are based on the self-study that has been submitted;
- the visit is concluded with a verbal report of the findings.

3. conclusion:

- after its final visit to the discipline, the visiting committee draws up one report giving a) a general picture of the state of affairs in the discipline as a whole and b) the findings in each faculty;
- the visiting committee sends the general section of the report and the section on each faculty to the faculty board with the request that factual inaccuracies be pointed out;
- the visiting committee submits the report to the Governing Board of the VSNU as its principal;
- the VSNU makes the report public and brings it to the attention of the inspectorate, the minister and others;
- after the final report is submitted, the visiting committee is disbanded.

2. THE VISITING COMMITTEE

External quality assessment is carried out by a committee of independent experts, known as the visiting committee.

2.1. The task of the visiting committee

The visiting committee's task is:

a) to form an opinion on the basis of information supplied by the faculty and by means of discussions held on the spot about the standard of education and the quality of the educational process, including the organisation of education and the standard of the graduates; in assessing quality, the committee must look at the requirements/expectations of the student, the faculty/discipline and society, and prospective employers in particular;

b) to make suggestions on quality improvement.

The findings of the visiting committee are put into a public report (see 2.6).

2.2. The members of the visiting committee

A visiting committee has approximately seven members (including the chairperson). In principle it is selected on the basis of the following criteria:

- the chairperson does not work in one of the faculties to be visited;
- at least four members are experts, whereby the aim is to achieve a distribution between experts who work (or have worked) at the university (whether or not in the discipline to be visited) and experts from among potential employers or from professional organisations which have an interest in the specific schooling;
- in selecting experts the aim is to cover as far as possible all specialisations within the field of study;
- at least one of the members of the committee is a foreign expert (either a Dutch expert who teaches abroad, or a foreigner who is familiar with the Dutch situation);
- the presence of an expert in the field of educational planning and educational processes in University Education (a theory of education specialist, a study coordinator, a study counsellor or a teaching methodologist) is desirable;
- insight into and experience of the university structure and the developments in recent years must be clearly represented on the committee.

N.B. Should a discipline consider an international committee desirable because of the nature of the field of study, it is possible to select the majority of the members from among foreign experts.

The secretariat of the visiting committee is provided by the VSNU office.

2.3. Nomination and appointment of the visiting committee

The members of the visiting committee are appointed by the Governing Board of the VSNU on the recommendation of the Executive Board. The list of nominations is drawn up after consultation with the Disciplinary Board (DB) concerned. The following procedure is followed:

a) the chairperson of the VSNU requests the Disciplinary Board (DB) which covers the discipline to make a recommendation for the selection of the visiting committee;
b) the disciplinary board submits a recommendation for the selection of a committee, taking the criteria into account (see 2.2);
c) the chairperson of the disciplinary board sends the list of names (including a proposal for chairperson) with a brief description of the qualifications of those involved to the Executive Board of the VSNU;
d) the Executive Board gives its opinion of the recommendation and draws up a list of nominations;
e) after the list of nominations has been drawn up, the chairperson of the VSNU approaches the nominees;
f) the Governing Board of the VSNU gives its opinion of the list of nominations and appoints the members.

N.B. If the Disciplinary Board fails to put forward a proposal within six weeks of the request's being sent, the Executive Board may itself draw up a list of nominations.

2.4. The working method of the visiting committee

In principle, a visiting committee chooses its own method of working. It must, however, observe the following points:

a) the visiting committee meets as soon as possible after it is appointed; this meeting is used, among other things, to formulate basic principles considered important in the evaluation of the discipline;

b) as soon as possible after the meeting referred to in a), the visiting committee calls a meeting with representatives of the faculties to be visited, in the context of the Disciplinary Board or otherwise, in which task, working method, criteria and points of special attention are discussed;

c) after receipt of the self-study (see 3.3) the committee informs the faculty as soon as possible of the supplementary information relating to the subject it wishes to receive from the faculty;

d) the secretary of the visiting committee gets in touch with the coordinator in the faculty as quickly as possible to work out the logistics;

e) in setting up the visits, the points in 2.5 are taken into account;

f) reporting occurs in accordance with the guidelines in 2.6.

2.5. The visit of the visiting committee

The visiting committee visits each faculty within the discipline concerned. The following points are observed in respect of the visits:

a) the secretary of the visiting committee draws up a schedule of visits in consultation with the committee and the faculties;

b) the visit lasts two days;

c) the programme for the visit is drawn up in consultation with the coordinator in the faculty; in any event there will be discussions with the faculty board, the department board(s) involved, the discipline committee, lecturers in core subjects, study counsellors, study coordinators, students and research assistants; besides holding discussions the committee will also look at areas for practical work, laboratories, libraries;

d) the visiting committee decides on the final programme and decides who it wishes to interview;

e) the faculty provides the facilities during the visit (meeting rooms, lunches, etc.);

f) if a committee members works in the faculty to be visited, he/she does not take part in the visit;

g) at the end of the second day, the committee gives a verbal report of its findings to the faculty board. The committee gives the Executive Board of the university the opportunity to be present at this meeting.

2.6. The report

After all visits are concluded, the visiting committee issues one report. It will contain chapters on at least the following aspects:

1. description of how the visitation process went;
2. the findings in respect of the aspects referred to under 2.1.a for each faculty;
3. a general evaluation of the discipline as a whole.

The following procedure is observed in publishing the report:

a) after all visits in the discipline concerned are completed, the visiting committee draws up a draft report; the visiting committee sends the general section and the section relating to the faculty to the relevant faculty board with the request that factual inaccuracies be pointed out; these are to be brought to the attention of the committee within 14 days and corrected by the committee; if a faculty wishes, a reaction from the faculty may be included as an appendix to the report;
b) the committee submits the definitive report to the Governing Board of the VSNU;

c) the Governing Board of the VSNU decides how the report will be published and sends the report to the faculty board, the Executive Board of the university and other parties involved, and to the minister and the Inspectorate of Higher Education for their information.

2.7. Costs and reimbursement of expenses

a. The costs incurred by the committee during the visits will be paid directly by the VSNU. These include:
   - the costs of the reception dinner on the first evening,
   - the costs of accommodation for the committee members,
   - where necessary, the costs of hiring a meeting room outside the institution for the committee's use.

b. The members of the committee submit an account through the secretary to the VSNU of their travelling expenses and other expenses of their stay incurred as a result of their work for the committee.

c. All other costs incurred as a result of the visit are borne by the faculty concerned.

d. The chairpersons and members of the committee receive a fee for the work from the VSNU for each visit to be made. This fee is fixed before the work commences.

2.8. Disbandment of the visiting committee

The visiting committee is disbanded after the definitive report has been submitted.

3. THE FACULTY

3.1. The coordinator in the faculty

As soon as the faculty has been formally notified that it will be involved that year in a visitation by a committee of experts, it appoints a coordinator. The tasks of the coordinator may include:

* organising the self-study (see 3.3.);
* acting as contact person for the committee and the VSNU;
* consulting with the secretary of the visiting committee on drawing up the programme for the visit;
* informing the staff and students (or arranging for them to be informed) about the purpose and process of the visitation.

In respect of matters relating to the visitation process, direct contact may be maintained with the coordinator. The coordinator is also the addressee for all correspondence relating to the visitation process. However, a copy of all official documents must also be sent to the Executive Board of the university.

3.2. Information for the visiting committee

a) Prior to the visit by the visiting committee, the faculty must supply the following information:

1) a self-study (see 3.3.), ten copies;
2) the most recent prospectus, eight copies;
3) if available, the most recent annual report on education, ten copies.

b) The committee may also ask for additional information.

c) During the visit, the following information must be available for the committee's inspection:

- annual reports, development plans and reports on education, in so far as they exist;
- recent internal evaluation reports on education;
- a selection of the lecture notes, readers and textbooks used;
- examples of master thesis and examination papers.

3.3. The self-study

a) The primary source of information for the visiting committee is the self-study produced by the faculty, which is compiled in accordance with the guidelines given in Chapter 5. In so far as the annual report on education conforms to these guidelines, it may be submitted in place of the self-study.

b) The self-study contains both a description and an analysis of existing problems and an outline of the plans to tackle these problems. In any event it must contain information on:

* the student intake
* course hours and course progress
* programme content
* educational process
* programme organisation/management
* the graduates.

c) The self-study must be submitted by a date to be fixed by the visiting committee. In general, this will be at least one month before the date of the visiting committee's first visit to a faculty.

d) The faculty board is responsible for issuing the self-study.

e) The self-study is the committee's point of departure for the discussions during the visit. This means that everyone involved in the discussions is assumed to be familiar with the contents of the report.

4. THE VSNU AND EXTERNAL QUALITY ASSESSMENT

4.1. The responsibilities of the VSNU

a) The Governing Board of the VSNU is the visiting committee's principal.

b) The VSNU office is responsible for coordinating external quality assessment.

4.2. Appeals committee

In the event that problems arise in relation to the visitation or disputes occur between the visiting committee and a university or faculty, the Governing Board will appoint an appeals committee. Each of the parties can bring the dispute before this committee. If the appeals committee is unable to resolve the issue, it will refer it to the Governing Board of the VSNU, which will make a binding decision.

4.3. The visitation schedule

The Governing Board has set up a timetable of reviews for the period 1988 - 1992 (see appendix 4). Reference should be made to the publication "Rooster voor onderwijsvisitaties en indeling der studierichtingen naar visitatie-commissie" (Timetable of External Program Review and the distribution of degree programs among visiting committees) (VSNU, July 1989) for the timetable and distribution of the degree programs among the visiting committees.

NOTE
In cases not provided for by the protocol, the Governing Board of the VSNU will decide.

APPENDIX 1

Survey of visits 1988-1990

VC	number of fields of study	number of faculties
1988		
psychologie	1	7
physics & astronomy	2	9
history	1	7
mechanical engineering	2	4
1989		
geography	5	7
non-western etc	14	6
mathematics & information theory	2	10
industrial design-ing & aviation- and space travel	2	2
1990		
biology	2	7
law	7	9
philosophy	2	9
economics	8	7
electrical engineering	2	3
total	50	87

APPENDIX 2

TABLES FOR QUANTITATIVE DATA

A balance should be aimed at between data which are available at a central level (Board of Administration), and data which are available at a decentralised level (faculties, departments). This is the only way to advance the comparability, reliability, and verifiability of the data. therefore it is necessary that the faculties provide the same data (the same datum date, the same definition, the same number) as those which are avilable at central level and which are provided to external institutions by the central level (whether or not in a more aggregated form). If, according to a faculty (and/or a department), the use of different data (different definition, different datum date, etc) is advisable, those data could be supplied as well, provided the cause of the differences, with respect to the 'central' data, are mentioned. Even then, the provision of the 'central' data remains obligatory.
It should be stressed that not only the same datum date and definition (c.q. interpretation) must be used, but that the data must also be identical to those which are included in the central information systems, partly with a view to external provision of information, e.g. the C.B.S. (Central Bureau of Statistics) December count, the scientific report, the educational report, the financial account.

Table 1: Influx of first-year students (counting date December 1)
Field of study:

	Fulltime			Parttime		
year of study	M	F	total	M	F	total
1982/1983						
1983/1984						
1984/1985						
1986/1987						
1987/1988						
1989/1990						
etc.						

EXPLANATORY NOTE
First-year students are the inflowing students who are matriculated at the faculty for the first time, i.e. including students, coming from other faculties.
The counting date is December 1, as with the CBS counts.

Table 2: Total number of students (counting date December 1).
Field of study:

	Fulltime			Parttimes		
year of study	M	F	total	M	F	total
1982/1983						
1983/1984						
1984/1985						
1986/1987						
1987/1988						
1989/1990						
etc.						

Table 3: Success ratio of cohorts 1982/1983 untill 1989/1990

year of study	size of cohort on dec. 1*)	% P-exams after:			% D-exams of the P-influx after:				% D-exams of the D-influx after:			
		1 year	2 years	>2years	4 years	5years	6years	> 6 years	4yrs.	5yrs.	6yrs.	> 6yrs.
1982/83			**)	**)	***)				***)			
1983/84												
1984/85												
1985/86												
1986/87												
1987/88												
1988/89												
1989/90												
etc												

* numbers must be identical to the report of table 1
**) the percentages are cumulative
***) the first percentage has been calculated on the basis of the first-year influx (see column 1) The second number has been calculated on the basis of the doctoral influx.

Table 4: Available scientific personnel in persons and fte's.

category	M	F	total		percentage of graduates
			persons	fte's	
Professor					
Principal University Lecturer					
University Lecturer					
Remaining scientific personnel *)					
Assistants in Training					
total					

*) excluding A.I.T., but including students-assistants.

APPENDIX 3

CONFIRMATION OF APPOINTMENT

The Governing Board,

duly observing the protocol for external quality assessment, laid down on 4 November 1988, and the letter to the Executive Boards of the universities dated ....., reference ....., in which the visitation of ..... was formally announced,

DECREES:

1. A visiting committee for..... is appointed

2. ..... is appointed chairperson and member of the visiting committee

The following are appointed members of the committee:
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

..... is appointed secretary of the visiting committee

3. The task of the visiting committee is:

a) to form an opinion on the basis of information supplied by the faculty and by means of discussions held on the spot about the standard of education and the quality of the educational process, including the organisation of education and the standard of the graduates; in assessing quality, the committee must look at the requirements/expectations of the student, the faculty/discipline and society, in particular prospective employers;

b) to make suggestions on improving quality.

The findings of the visiting committee are issued in a public report.

4. In carrying out its task the visiting committee will in any event include:

a. the discipline ..... in the ..... faculty at the university of .....
b. the discipline ..... in the ..... faculty at the university of .....
c. the discipline ..... in the ..... faculty at the university of .....
d. the discipline ..... in the ..... faculty at the university of .....
e. the discipline ..... in the ..... faculty at the university of .....
f. the discipline ..... in the ..... faculty at the university of .....
g. the discipline ..... in the ..... faculty at the university of .....

5. The visiting committee will decide on its own working method, taking into account the guidelines in the protocol.

6. The visiting committee will submit its report to the Governing Board one month after the final visitation, in any event before ..... 198..

7. The costs incurred by the committee during the visits will be paid directly by the VSNU.
The members of the committee submit an account of their travelling expenses and other expenses of their stay incurred as a result of their work for the committee, through the secretary to the VSNU.
The chairperson and members of the committee receive a fee for the work from the VSNU for each visit to be made. This fee is fixed before the work commences.

8. Copies of this confirmation of appointment will be sent to:

- the chairperson, members and secretary of the committee;
- the governing bodies of the universities;
- the faculty boards concerned
- the chairperson of the discipline consultative body involved in the visitation;
- the Inspectorate of Higher Education;
- the organisation where the members are employed.

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(P. van der Schans)
chairman VSNU

APPENDIX 4

TIMETABEL OF REVIEWS 1991-1996

1991

* Western Languages
* Theology
* Geology
* Political Science + Public Administration
* Medicine

1992

* University Teachers Education
* Pedagogics & Didactics
* Sociology & Non-Wester Sociology/cultural Anthropology
* Agricultural Sciences

1993

* Experimental Programs in Linguistics & Literature
* Chemistry & Pharmacy
* Civil Engineering, Architecture, Geodesey
* Dentistry

1994

* History, Arts history & Archeology
* Psychology
* Physics & Astronomy
* Business studies

1995

* Mathematics & Information Technolgy
* Geography, Planning, Prehistory & Protohistory
* Non-western Languages & Literature
* Mechanical Engineering c.a.

1996

* Philosophy
* Biology
* Electrical Engineering
* Law
* Economics

APPENDIX 5

PUBLIKATIES IN HET KADER VAN DE KWALITEITSZORG

- VSNU (1988). OVER DE KWALITEIT VAN HET NEDERLANDS UNIVERSITAIR ONDERWIJS. Utrecht: VSNU.

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